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 RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE 8421
 RUQMOD/AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE 6025
 RUQMAM/AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE 1838
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 EXDIS//FOR SENATOR PERCY FROM UNDER SECRETARY STOESEL
 E.O. 12065: RDS-1,2 - 1/16/02 (STOESEL, WALTER)
 SUBJECT: CODEL PERCY VISIT TO SYRIA: THE GOLAN ISSUE

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR FORTHCOMING VISITS TO SYRIA AND LEBANON WE WANT YOU TO BE AWARE OF THE PRESENT STATE OF PLAY IN THE UN ON SYRIA'S EFFORT VIS-A-VIS ISRAEL'S GOLAN LAW.

3. ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 15, IT BECAME CLEAR TO SYRIA THAT IT HAD FAILED TO MUSTER THE NECESSARY NINE VOTES IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO GAIN A PROCEDURAL MAJORITY FOR THE HARSH SANCTIONS RESOLUTION SYRIA HAD TABLED. WE HAD, OF COURSE, MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES THAT WE WOULD VETO CHAPTER VII SANCTIONS. THIS WOULD BE TRUE BOTH IN A CALL FOR MANDATORY SANCTIONS AS WELL AS IN AN IMPLIED OR IMPLICIT CALL FOR VOLUNTARY

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SANCTIONS UNDER CHAPTER VII.

4. AT THE VERY LAST MINUTE, WE MADE RENEWED AND VERY STRONG DEMARCHES TO SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WHICH WERE WAVERING IN PARTICULAR PANAMA AND ZAIRE. THE FIRM PANAMA DECISION NOT TO VOTE FOR THE SYRIAN RESOLUTION

(TECHNICALLY SPONSORED BY JORDAN AS AN SC MEMBER) BROKE THE BACK OF SYRIAN EFFORTS, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT.

5. THE SYRIANS ARE NOW CONSIDERING THEIR NEXT MOVE AND IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT THEY WILL DECIDE TO DO. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY WILL PRESS FOR A MORE MODERATE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION; IT IS ALSO CONCEIVABLE THAT THEY WILL EXPLORE THE ADVANTAGES OF TAKING THE ISSUE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. A GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION WOULD, OF COURSE, NOT BE BINDING. OUR PRESENT GUESS IS THAT SYRIA WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR SOME FORM OF SANCTIONS, IF NOT IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD.

6. WE ARE AWARE FROM YOUR DISCUSSIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA THAT THE SAUDIS IN PARTICULAR HAD URGED US TO NEGOTIATE A RESOLUTION WITH THE SYRIANS. WE REVIEWED THE PROS AND CONS OF ACTIVE US NEGOTIATIONS--CONSULTING CLOSELY WITH AMBASSADOR KIRKPATRICK AND THE SECRETARY--RIGHT UP THROUGH FRIDAY MORNING, JANUARY 15. WE DECIDED NOT TO DO SO AND TO GO INSTEAD FOR A BLOCK OF NO VOTES AND ABSTENTIONS WHICH WOULD FORESTALL THE SYRIANS. WE HAD, HOWEVER, MADE IT THOROUGHLY CLEAR WHAT SHOULD BE AND WHAT SHOULD NOT BE IN A RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO US OR ALLOW US TO ABSTAIN. AMONG OTHER THINGS, WE SUGGESTED REFERENCES TO 242 AND 338 AS WELL AS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD PUBLICLY AFFIRMED THEIR READINESS TO NEGOTIATE "UNCONDITIONALLY" WITH SYRIA WITHIN CONTEXT OF 242 AND 338; HOWEVER, MAKING OUR POSITION CLEAR WAS IN NO WAY A REAL NEGOTIATING EFFORT.

7. WE WILL PROBABLY HOLD TO THE POSITION OF NOT NEGOTIATING A RESOLUTION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL BUT WILL, OF COURSE, REVIEW DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY UNFOLD.

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8. UNFORTUANTELY, HAD THE SYRIAN RESOLUTION COME TO A
VOTE, THE UK AND FRANCE WOULD HAVE ABSTAINED IN LIEU OF
JOINING US IN A NO VOTE. HAIG

END OF MESSAGE SECRET